

Message Text

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51

ACTION ITFE-05

INFO OCT-01 EA-06 IO-10 ISO-00 SSO-00 SR-02 ORM-01 VO-03

SCA-01 INSE-00 AID-05 FDRE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03

H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02

SS-15 USIA-06 SY-05 HEW-02 /086 W

----- 006313

R 230855Z JUN 75

FM AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 272

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

USMISSION GENEVA

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

USUN NEW YORK 573

AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

CINCPAC

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE KUALA LUMPUR 3533

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SREF, VN, MY

SUBJ: VN REFUGEES ON PULAU PERHENTIAN

REF: A. STATE 133652

B. K.L. 3470

C. K.L. 3077

D. K.L. 3397

1. SUMMARY: EMBASSY TEAM HAS RETURNED FROM INTERVIEWING VN REFUGEES ON PULAU PERHENTIAN. TEAM ESTIMATES THAT BETWEEN ONE-THIRD TO ONE-HALF OF APPROXIMATELY 1000 REFUGEES WILL BE ELIGIBLE FOR PAROLE TO U.S. UNDER ESTABLISHED CRITERIA. REFUGEE MORALE APPEARS SURPRISINGLY GOOD, AND THEY CURRENTLY APPEAR TO BE ADEQUATELY HOUSED AND FED. END SUMMARY.

2. EMBASSY TEAM CONSISTING OF ECON FIRST SECRETARY, POL

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SECOND SECRETARY, USIS THIRD SECRETARY, AND POL STAFF

SECRETARY HAS CONCLUDED INTERVIEWS WITH APPROXIMATELY 330 HEADS OF FAMILIES OF VIETNAMESE REFUGEES GOM HAS CONFINED TO PULAU PERHENTIAN. TEAM ESTIMATES THAT APPROXIMATELY ONE-THIRD TO ONE-HALF OF REFUGEES MAY BE ELIGIBLE FOR PAROLE TO U.S. UNDER CRITERIA PROVIDED REF A (WIDE RANGE IN POTENTIAL ELIGIBILITY IS DUE TO LARGE NUMBER OF REFUGEES WHO BELIEVE THEY MAY HAVE CLOSE RELATIVES EVACUATED DURING GENERAL EVACUATION). NAME CHECKS WILL FOLLOW UNDER FALCON SERIES AS SOON AS RAW DATA BROUGHT BACK BY TEAM CAN BE TRANSCRIBED INTO CABLE FORM. TEAM ALSO DEVELOPED INFORMATION ON REFUGEES WITH RELATIVES IN THIRD COUNTRIES; AND THOSE WITH MORE DISTANT RELATIONS IN U.S. INFORMATION ON THOSE WITH RELATIVES IN THIRD COUNTRIES WILL BE PROVIDED TO RELEVANT EMBASSIES HERE, AND INFORMATION ON THOSE WITH MORE DISTANT RELATIVES IN U.S. WILL BE FORWARDED TO DEPARTMENT AS FOLLOW-UP TO FALCON.

3. MORALE AMONG REFUGEES AS REPORTED IN REF D APPEARS SURPRISINGLY GOOD. THEY HAVE CHOSEN EITHER BY ELECTION OR CONSENSUS A LEADER AND A 6-MAN COUNCIL WHO ARE DEALING WITH MALAYSIAN OFFICIALS. BULK OF THE REFUGEES ARE HOUSED IN MALAYSIAN ARMY TENTS, WITH A CONSIDERABLE NUMBER LIVING ABOARD VARIETY OF BOATS WHICH BROUGHT THEM TO PULAU PERHENTIAN, A SMALL NUMBER ARE OCCUPYING SOME OF THE PERMANENT STRUCTURES WHICH EXIST ON THE PREVIOUSLY UNINHABITED ISLAND. GOM OFFICIAL TOLD EMBOFF GOM IS SPENDING APPROXIMATELY M\$1.50/DAY (EQUALS US\$0.62 AT CURRENT EXCHANGE RATE) FOR FEEDING OF EACH REFUGEE. REFUGEES SAY FOOD HAS IMPROVED CONSIDERABLY ALTHOUGH THEY LACK FRESH FRUIT AND VEGETABLES. MAJOR MEDICAL PROBLEM APPEARS TO BE RASHES AND OTHER MINOR SKIN DISORDERS COMMON TO THE TROPICS. GOM PLANS TO MOVE REFUGEES TO SITE 17 MILES FROM KUALA TRENGGANU ON MAINLAND BEFORE ONSET OF THE MONSOON SEASON IN AUGUST.

4. TEAM OBSERVED NO EVIDENCE/OF "ORGIES" REPORTED REF B. REFUGEE LEADER DID REFER TO "MALCONTENTS" WHO HAD LEFT FOR SINGAPORE, AND MALAYSIAN DISTRICT OFFICER MENTIONED "PROBLEMS" WHEN THE REFUGEES FIRST ARRIVED WHICH HE IMPLIED HAVE SINCE BEEN RESOLVED. THERE ARE LARGE NUMBERS OF LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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MALAYSIAN POLICE ON ISLAND ARMED WITH M-16'S AND STEN GUNS, AND POLICE MADE WHAT APPEARED TO TEAM TO BE EXCESSIVE SHOW OF FORCE PRESUMABLY WITH IDEA OF COWING REFUGEES. HOWEVER, TEAM OBSERVED NO OVERT HOSTILITY BETWEEN REFUGEES AND MALAYSIANS. REFUGEES DID OBSERVE THAT THEY HAD RECEIVED ONLY A "HANDFUL" OF LETTERS PRIOR TO TEAM'S ARRIVAL, AT WHICH TIME CONSIDERABLY LARGER NUMBER OF LETTERS WERE DISTRIBUTED. REFUGEES ALSO WERE FEARFUL THAT LETTERS THEY

WERE GIVING TO MALAYSIAN RED CROSS WERE NOT BEING DELIVERED.
MAIL APPARENTLY SUBJECT TO CHECK BY MALAYSIANS HAD ADVISED
THEM SHORTLY AFTER ARRIVAL ON PULAU PERHENTIAN, THAT REFUGEES
WOULD RECEIVE NO ASSISTANCE FROM USG, AND THEY SHOULD RETURN
TO VIETNAM. WHEN PRG REPS BROUGHT TO KOTA BARU TO MEET WITH
REFUGEE DELEGATION (REF C) REFUGEE REPS REFUSED TO SPEAK
TO THEM. REFUGEES ARE, OF COURSE, ANXIOUS ABOUT THEIR
KIN WHO THEY BELIEVE ALSO FLED VN, AND ABOUT THEIR OWN
FUTURES. ANXIETY IS LIKELY TO INTENSIFY AS TIME PASSES.
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